



CURRY  
ARTS  
JOURNAL

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This journal is designed to be a showcase for anyone in the Curry community to exhibit their writing and hopefully artwork. We hope that this will inspire more people to become involved in getting the community to acknowledge the literary aspects in Curry.

Jason Healy  
Patricia Doherty



## CONTENTS

<b>The Lesson</b>	
Kevin Crimmins.....	7
<b>I Vow My Ever Lasting Love</b>	
Rachel Cohen.....	12
<b>Accident?</b>	
Karen Chmielinski.....	13
<b>Flashes</b>	
Anne Gerlock.....	14
<b>Addict At the Red Light</b>	
Kim Schaffner.....	18
<b>The Umbrella</b>	
Eric Boormeester.....	19
<b>The Male Body</b>	
Safara Fisher .....	26
<b>Dancing</b>	
Asa Leighton.....	28
<b>My Father</b>	
Stacey Layne.....	29
<b>3 A.M</b>	
Amy Coyle.....	30
<b>Unpardonable Sin</b>	
Yvonne J. Emery.....	34
<b>"My Sisiter"</b>	
Kristin Scinto.....	35
<b>ReBirth:</b>	
Jason Healy.....	36
<b>Alone</b>	
Zephr.....	40
<b>Caged</b>	
Patricia Doherty.....	41
<b>Eating An Orange</b>	
Kim Schaffner.....	52



## The Lesson

-by Kevin Crimmins

"Where were you last night?"

The voice didn't register immediately, as he struggled to sit up and grip the receiver. He only picked up the phone to stop the damn ringing. He needed Excedrin and a glass of water more than a conversation, but he struggled to get out, "Hello."

She repeated, "Where were you last night?"

No doubt now, he knew who it was, but in all honesty, he couldn't answer that question just yet. He wasn't quite sure where he had been.

Through the pounding in his head, and the yelling in his ear, he thought he heard his shower running. Had he left it on himself? No, that would be too easy. Ashley still wanted to know where he had been but he was more concerned with who was in his shower. Rich collapsed back onto his bed; the phone fell to his side; her voice could still be heard. Too many questions, he thought, so early in the morning. He knew no one was going to like the answers.

Rich would liked to have gone back to sleep. It would have been simple: maybe these problems would just away. But he knew they wouldn't. One problem was on the other end of the phone: another was in his bathroom.

He sat up, on the other side of the bed, arms resting on his legs, cleared his throat and figured he'd give it a try. He picked up the phone.

"Ashley honey, listen, let me take a shower and I'll call you right back. Ok?"

"Rich, you screwed up last night. You're not going to do it today!"

"I'm sorry, I guess I got out of hand, but..."

"No. Not now Rich, get in the shower. I'll pick you up. We're meeting my parents in a half hour."

"Someone's in my shower," he said sarcastically to a dial tone, and slammed the phone down.

He remembered somehow, Ashley's parents were in town and he was supposed to meet them last night after work. He decided to have a few beers first. He knew he'd needed the beers because he had met the parents before. Right now, the last thing he could recall was playing pool, maybe darts. It wasn't too



clear. Last night could wait. He needed to get in the bathroom and get his "guest" out.

He stood up, slipped on some shorts and noticed a Trojan wrapper on the floor. The pounding in his head seemed to intensify. He picked it up and looked around the bed.

"Only one, I must have been wasted," he said vainly.

He was grabbing clothes furiously, straightening the bed, trying to get the order that wasn't in his life, into his room.

Rich walked out to the living room, past the bathroom. The shower was still running. "What the hell was she washing?"

Two glasses on the coffee table, half a joint in the ashtray. At least now he knew why everything was so vague. He couldn't find her purse anywhere in the apartment. He wasn't looking for money or anything. He just thought that if could find out her name, he wouldn't seem so callous as he explained that she had to get right out, that his girlfriend was on her way over.

He stared at the bathroom door, as though somehow he was actually doing something. He wasn't. He knocked lightly, then louder, no response. The water, the pipes, they both seemed louder than ever.

Rich needed to be doing something, but all he could do was wait. Wait and hope, hope that somehow he could pull this off. Ashley always said he would learn this lesson one day. He figured he probably would, but not today, not this way. It had been so long since he really messed up like this. Things had been going great between the two of them. Ashley grudgingly tolerated his nights with the guys and Rich would occasionally go shopping with her. Rich had always known he was the lucky one in this relationship.

Recently, they had discussed living together. It was the "structured life" that Rich just wasn't a fan of. Ashley wanted to be engaged first. She said her parents would never accept it otherwise. Of course, Rich suggested that they didn't need to know. It was always this between them. Ashley went straight at things and Rich would try to get around the edges.

Rich grabbed the Excedrin out of the kitchen

drawer. Three capsules bounced on the counter. Two would never be enough. He turned on the tap and reached above for a glass. He heard the shower come to a stop and glanced at the bathroom door. The glass slipped from his fingers, hit on the edge of the sink and shattered. He instinctively jumped back and felt the shard of glass pierce his foot.

"What else could go wrong?" Rich thought as he hopped into the living room and sat down on the couch.

The glass was easy to get out, it was a big piece. He was bleeding badly and needed a bandage. Rich hopped over to the bathroom and knocked.

"Hey, you think I could get in there? I need to get going."

There was only a garbled response. The sink was running and it sounded like the noise you make when you're brushing your teeth and you try to talk.

"Get a clue honey," he mumbled in exasperation as hopped to his bedroom. He grabbed a sock from the dresser and pulled it over his foot. It would have to do for now.

Rich was past worrying about being polite. He just wanted in that bathroom. He went back to the door and began knocking. He stopped, yet the knocking continued. He looked towards the front door. The knocking continued. The bathroom door finally began to open. He quickly pulled it shut. "Stay in there," he said as he limped towards the front door.

He could see Ashley through the peep hole.

"Open this door," she shouted.

There wasn't much he could do now. He undid the chain and opened the door.

This was not good. He felt like a gold fish in a tank full of Oscars. Any minute now the feeding frenzy would begin. Ashley walked right past him.

"You look like shit."

"Thanks honey, you look great. How're your parents?" He wasn't even listening to her. He kept his eyes darting between her and the bathroom, trying to tell himself he wasn't panicking, but he was close. He left the door open and even considered leaving. Maybe she would follow.

"Enough of the bull Rich. Why aren't you dressed?"



He knew this question would come up and he had no good answer. Just then, the toilet flushed. Rich felt as though he was in it. Ashley looked at him, squinted her eyes and asked, "Who's in there?"

A million thoughts ran through his head. My sister, no she's met her. A co-worker, no he was always degrading the people he worked with.

Rich watched as Ashley knocked on the door.

"Good luck," Rich thought, "It hasn't worked for me all morning."

"Ashley...the neighbors...had a fight last night...and well...you know...I...had a couch available... so ...she..." The door opened.

"Well, hello," Ashley said.

"So she sent him over!" Rich blurted out.

"A guy?" he thought, "Who the hell was he? Where did he come from?" Rich's legs wobbled as he grabbed the wall for support. His head, his foot, they all hurt and now he felt nauseous.

"Are you all right?" Ashley and the stranger said in unison. Rich stumbled towards the door; he needed air. Ashley trailed behind him.

"I'm Jim, friend of Rich's," the guy said, as he followed them.

"I'm Ashley," she said in response, without really looking at him. "Let me get you some water, Rich." Ashley was off towards the kitchen. You could hear the crunch of the broken glass under her feet.

"What the hell went on here guys?" She yelled.

Rich pulled Jim close and whispered; "What did go on here, did we bring someone back here last night?"

"Someone?" Jim grinned.

Rich stood there frozen, mouth open.

"I've got to get going. Nice to meet you," Jim shouted back to the kitchen. He leaned over and whispered in Rich's ear, "You were great last night." Jim patted him on the ass and went out the door.

Ashley came in with the water. "He's gone? Seemed like a nice guy. I haven't heard you mention him before. How well do you know him?"

"Too well," Rich said with no emotion, as he continued to stare at the open door. He pushed the water away. "I'm fine." He couldn't look at her. "How could this have happened?" He thought: "I must have

really blown it last night." His choice of words caught him, a look of disgust crossed his face.

"You're fine?" Ashley said. "I don't think so Rich, you're standing here, white as a ghost, sweating, you're wearing boxers and one bloody sock, not to mention the bed-head you're sporting. And you're trying to tell me you're fine?" She was circling, moving in for the kill.

"I think I would like to be alone right now, Ashley."

"I think we need to have a talk, Rich. Sit down."

Rich slumped down on the couch, his head tilted back. "Not now Ashley. I think I've heard this before, you're right. Ok. Anything you say; you're right and I'm sorry."

"I don't think you've heard this," she said calmly.

She began by telling him how she had dinner with an empty chair and her parents the night before. When she got home, there was a message on her machine from Ted, the bartender at Baxter's. "He took your keys because you were passed out in a booth in the back. I went and got you and brought you home, Jim helped me carry you in here last night."

Rich seemed to perk up as she went along.

Ashley told him how she was sick of his irresponsibility, so she set the whole thing up. Jim was a friend of hers from work. She had called him last night to help her. This morning she had let him into the apartment.

"So nothing happened?" Rich interrupted.

"You were out worse than I've ever seen you."

He wanted to be mad at her, but how could he? Rich was relieved. He had been made a fool of and this was good news. He stood up; his head still hurt, his foot throbbed, but he felt great. He headed towards the bathroom.

"I'll be ready in a bit," he said as he closed the door.

He stared into the mirror. For the first time all morning he saw how hideous he looked and smiled. He turned toward the shower and out of the corner of his eye, saw the used condom in the waste basket under the sink. And there, in the window was Jim! Jim gave him a seductive smile and disappeared. He



whipped open the door.

"Ashley!" he yelled.

She sat there laughing.

"I hope you've learned your lesson Rich."



### **I Vow To You My Ever Lasting Love**

-by Rachel Cohen

I will rise with you at sunrise.

I will rise with you at dusk.

I will walk with you by sunlight.

I will walk with you by moonlight.

I will treasure every moment.

I will make your life complete.

I will rise with the knowledge that you will be by  
My side forever.

I will rise and remember your lasting love.

I will walk to the alter and greet you.

I will walk to your lasting dream.

I will treasure our moments of plenty.

I will help make your dreams a reality.

I will rise in your arms.

I will rise with sweet dreams of you.

I will walk with strength and courage as we journey.

I will treasure life; for today, tomorrow and yesterday

Will be the happiest moments of my life.

My soul is with you for all my days, for it will be

Forever endowed to you.

'Till my eternal rest is called, for today I will vow my

Ever lasting love.



### **Accident?**

-by Karen Chmielinski

Burned and bruised fingers,

Intertwined with mine.

Ah, but which ones are mine?

I don't know,

The lines have blurred.

That awkward silence between us,

You once complained of,

Has become comfortable.

Yes, I'll admit,

Even to those who scoff,

I believed,

Your word games.

Weaving your deceit

Behind an enchanting, expert mask,

My senses shut down.

And you, snatching love and

Pity from me.

So I lock my hand into yours.

Are you the only one to blame?

I'm afraid not.

But to forget comforts,

And allows blame

To look elsewhere.

Now I shut my eyes.





## Flashes

-by Anne Gerlock

I ran though the small corridor that led to the back stairs. I had to take the back stairs so that I didn't run into Vinny, my landlord. I was already one month behind on rent and getting really sick of his offers to let me "make it up to him."

As I ran up the dimly lit stairway, I could hear Mr. Rodriguez screaming at his wife. That poor woman. I pictured her trying to explain all of those bruises to her friends, her family, her boss. But as soon as the thought entered my mind, it was gone again. Who knows why? Maybe because I was scared or because if I thought about it too much, I might actually try to break their door down and burn his demented eyes out of his skull with his very own smelly cigar.

As I walked in the door to my apartment, I flicked the light on and the room quickly grew heavy with the fluorescent glow. I was untying, unbuttoning, and peeling off my uniform from the diner and changing into the one for the bar. While struggling with my stockings, I pressed the message button on the phone next to my bed.

"Hey sweetie, it's Robbie...um, I don't think I'll make it over tonight so...uh, I don't know I'll call ya."

Everything stopped. I slumped back onto my bed with my stockings half on. I felt frozen. It wasn't what he said, it was the way he said it. The "I've been fucking somebody else" tone of voice that was so familiar. I never thought I'd hear it again though. Dear God, how could I have been so stupid?

I could feel the knot in my throat growing like it was going to burst. I opened my eyes wide so I wouldn't cry and tilted my head far enough so that if I did, the tears wouldn't run down my face and ruin my make-up. I had to be at the bar in twenty minutes.

I didn't remember anything about getting to work that day. The walk to the subway, the train itself, and the short walk that led me to the bar, things that had been a part of my life for almost an entire year, were blank in my memory. I was so used to this monotonous routine that I simply walked my way through it never leaving the world in my head.

Robbie's words on the answering machine plagued my thoughts.

I remembered Robbie telling me the first time that he was so sorry and that it would "never ever happen again." Maybe I was weak and stupid to give in to him, but I loved him so much and I trusted him with all of my mind.

"Hey legs!" yelled some drunk middle-aged man from the balcony to the left of the dance floor. "Get me another beer and I promise to make it worth your while."

I was used to this treatment so the sting of his slimy words disappeared in the air after they were spoken. At least he was using his voice instead of his hands to get my attention. Most of the men at the bar had decided that the best way to get a waitress' attention was to reach up her skirt or snap her bra strap. Sometimes it could get rough, but all of the girls were pretty used to it.

While walking back to the bar to fill the order, I recognized Mr. Rodriguez kissing someone who was not his wife. It was strange how it happened, but the second that I saw him, everything about my relationship with Robbie hit me. The abuse, how I hid it, and how I kept going back to him made me the typical model for the battered woman. I guess it was at this point that my denial finally left me. I never really thought that he hit me that hard, but I had just as many bruises from Robbie as Mrs. Rodriguez had from her husband.

My hands began to shake and I dropped the tray I had been holding. Glasses fell and shattered all around me. It seemed as if everyone in the bar turned around to gawk at the frail, ignorant, battered girl in her slutty little waitress uniform and her thick make-up used partially to cover up her bruises and partially to make herself feel a little bit pretty. Tonight, she didn't feel a little bit pretty, she felt a little bit slapped around.

"Hey Shelly," yelled Bill, my boss, over the music. "Are you ok, hon? Why don't ya go on a little break and I'll get somebody to clean this up huh?"

"I've gotta get out of here Bill, I'm really sorry," I said, already running into the back room for my coat.

I could hear him yelling after me as I bolted out



the front door. "You can't leave me hangin' like this and expect to have a job tomorrow Shell...damn women."

The second that I entered my apartment I could feel the chill of old memories, that couldn't be old yet, pour into me. I took a shower to relax and to wash the night off of me.

While stepping out of the shower I looked in the mirror on the back of the bathroom door. Mirrors were something that I always avoided, but I stared at the woman that was me. She looked so frightened standing there, water dripping over her old scars and stinging her new ones. She was in a shell. A tiny, almost invisible, shell. She needed something. It was security that she had, but love that she needed. I prayed for a moment that she would find it.

I focused on my present bruises and pictured all of my past ones. Suddenly, my entire body filled with scratches, burns, and black and blue patches. I hysterically struggled to find one inch that was not beaten. I fell too the floor and flashed back to several times that Robbie had come at me with his fist, his foot, his knee, or whatever he could get his hands on. All I could see were hundreds of flashes of the harsh contact, of whatever he chose to hurt me with. When I came back to reality, I threw on my robe remembering that I hated mirrors.

It was about three hours later that I fell into a shaky sleep, and almost an hour after that when I was awoken drunk, Robbie letting himself into my apartment. He took the liberty of turning on my bedroom light.

"Hey baby," he said stumbling into the room. "I told ya I'd be here."

"No, no Robbie." I said, squinting and waiting for my eyes to adjust to the light. "You're drunk, just leave, please leave."

"You don't want me to leave, I know you don't." He slurred, flopping on top of me.

"Yes, I do want you to leave, right now!"

I squirmed underneath his weight trying to free myself while he tore at my clothes.

"Robbie, No...just get off of me, stop!" I yelled, but the more I tried to make him stop the more violently he persisted. I screamed and cried and pushed

at his chest when all the while, the same flashes that surrounded me in the bathroom earlier, invaded my mind now. I saw his fist rush at my face and crack my left cheek. I saw his knee crush my back and his lighter burn my forearm. The white in between the flashes started to come quicker and I could feel my brain expanding against my skull. He had his mouth pressed against mine forcing a kiss to muffle my screams. When he released it for a second, I screamed at him again and he said, "What's the matter with you? Get into it baby."

I was still crying when the flashes picked up their pace again. I managed to wiggle an arm free and reached under the night stand to grab the baseball bat that Robbie had given me, "In case anyone tries to break in."

The images flooded my mind of the time when he back-handed me in the grocery store and he pulled me out on the fire escape by my hair. Then I saw him let himself into my apartment, jump on top of me, rip my clothes off and rape me. Then there were two more flashes, in one of them Robbie was alive.





## Addict At The Red Light

-by Kim Schaffner

She staggered out of the empty lot  
Toward the line of cars.

Blood dripped from her arm  
That still held the rubber strip  
That engorged her veins and  
Gave her journeys into haze.  
Screwing johns to pay for the trips.

She slurred "Hey Baby" while trying to balance  
On high heels that turned under her body weight.

Her breast hung out of a black leotard  
That could not contain the flesh  
That probably smothered the men who used her  
And dumped her in places like this.

She flung her body at the hoods of Chevys and  
Hondas  
Whose drivers honked their horns to try and rid her  
existence.

I waited my turn for her visit,  
But the light turned green.

She fell to the curb and started to scream  
And pulled at her matted hair.

Where had she been?  
Where was she going?

I phoned the police,  
"We'll take care of it."

How do you take care of something like that?



## The Umbrella

-by Eric Boormeester

(A man sits in a dim bar at a table. Empty beer bottles are scattered about the table. He is drinking a beer and another full one sits across from him waiting for someone. A man enters the bar and spots the man at the table. He walks to the table.)

Harvey: (Excited) Tom, my loving bro! I've bought you a brew.

Tom: (Looks at Harvey disappointed) (Calmly) You're drunk.

Harvey: And you're ugly. But I'll be sober in the morning.

Tom: No you won't.

Harvey: (Laughs) All right. Have a seat. (Pause) lookin' good.

(Tom sits across from Harvey.)

Tom: This mine?

Harvey: Yea.

(Tom takes a sip of the beer, then puts it down on the table, holding it and reading the label.)

Tom: Why are you doing this?

Harvey: Doing what?

Tom: (Looks at Harvey) Killing yourself.

Harvey: I'm fine..

Tom: Look at you; you look like shit.

Harvey: Thanks. It's under control.

Tom: You know you're lying. Mom and dad...

Harvey: Fuck Mom and dad, they don't give a shit...



They don't...

Tom: Hey man, we've all got problems...

Harvey: Really?

Tom: I suppose this is about the war again.

Harvey: Tom, you weren't even there. You...

Tom: Harvey, it's over man, has been for years. Stop fightin' it.

Harvey: Stop fightin' it? Is that what you just said? Huh, college boy?

Tom: Don't call me that. (Pause) Harvey, we care about you, we don't want...

Harvey: To have to tell friends and in-laws, yup, there's my good ol' crazy baby killin' brother that drinks and just isn't happy until he pukes so hard that his lung is floating in the toilet.

Tom: Stop the dramatics. You...

Harvey: It's a zit, get it?

Tom: What?

Harvey: Animal House, you remember?

Tom: What the fuck are you talking about?

Harvey: (Shrugs and gulps his beer) I don't know, it just kind of shot into my thoughts last night.

Tom: What?

Harvey: That thought popped into my head while I was bent over my toilet puking blood. That was last thought before I once again collapsed to the bathroom floor, and the pink elephants went on parade.

Tom: (Looks at Harvey for a long moment) That was

your last thought?

Harvey: Yea.

Tom: Belushi spitting out mashed potatoes.

Harvey: Yea.

Tom: You were practically dying of alcohol poisoning or the D.T'S, whatever, and a line from Animal House was all you could think of?

Harvey: Yup.

Tom: Why?

Harvey: Because I forgot my umbrella.

Tom: Harvey, I'm gettin' pissed off. What...

Harvey: it's just a little tool I picked up.

Tom: An umbrella?

Harvey: Yea. (Pause) Whenever a thought creeps into my head that I don't want there I try and snuff it out by concentrating on something else.

Tom: Like an umbrella.

Harvey: Yea. Like an umbrella. I just open up that umbrella in my head and it fills up my thoughts and blocks out whatever was fuckin' with me. I can't see past that umbrella.

Tom: What's this got to do with Animal House?

Harvey: I don't know. Last night I was real fucked up, I could feel it lining of my stomach burning away, my liver was about to shrivel up and come out with my piss. I thought I was dying.

Tom: Nice image. So then Belushi pops into your head.



Harvey: No, I was lookin' for the umbrella, like I said, I was pretty fucked up. And I had a loaded gun in my hand.

Tom: Shit Harvey!

Harvey: I was gonna use it, too. A second, and it could be over, a lifetime of pain packed into the barrel. I couldn't remember what I was supposed to think about. Funny, cause it was so automatic I got more trick umbrellas than the Penguin on Batman. But I couldn't remember it. I knew I was dying and I wanted to just put myself down like a lame horse, and that umbrella didn't come. So I thought about Belushi in Animal House. My favorite scene, in my favorite movie. Great fuckin' movie. (Pause) So you know, man, don't go preaching to me about the war being over. That war's still in me, always will be, it grows on me and eats away like some kind of parasite or cancer. That war took everything from me and all I'm left with a fucking umbrella.

Tom: Nice speech. I don't want to listen to you feel sorry for yourself. You said you had it under control? Oh yea, you really got it under control. I'm not gonna sit here and watch my brother self-destruct. Snap out of it. You're just feeling sorry for yourself.

Harvey: (Quietly) You ever see a body?

Tom: (Not listening) All right, I wasn't there, all right? I don't know what you're goin' through. But you just.

Harvey: Have you seen a body?

Tom: What?

Harvey: Have you ever seen a body?

Tom: I've seen a few nice ones at The Foxy Lady.

Harvey: That's not what I meant.

Tom: I know that's not what you meant, I was just makin' light...

Harvey: Nothing light about a dead body. Fact, they're pretty heavy. Two guys on both sides of a black body bag, shuffling their feet, trying not to trip over all the other poor, dead bastards. Dead weight. Where do you think that expression came from? That body is no lighter after it's dead than it was runnin' around in the jungle armed only with his weapon and instinct to survive. That body's no lighter after it's gunned down. The soul doesn't weigh much, makes no difference in weight when it's gone. You ever seen a body?

Tom: Harvey, you're my brother, I...

Harvey: (Softly) You ever seen a body?

Tom: Yea...Granddad's wake, Grandma's...

Harvey: (Laughs hard) Granddad lying in the same suit he was married in, lying in a \$500 pine box, being viewed by his grandson, the one he was proud of, Mr. college boy...

Tom: Harvey, don't...

Harvey: No, they do. Bugs crawl in and out of their nose and mouth. I know, I've seen it. I sat and watched a body. The skin gets bloated and a weird color. Pale, but not. Kind of you know, it's pale but it still looks purple or something. Sometimes the eyes are still open and you can look at his last expression and wonder, what exactly was going through their minds at that moment. Mom, dad, fiances, girlfriends, or just, fuck, this is it, this is really it, I'm dying and I just shit my pants. (Pause. Harvey gulps his beer) I can still see them, so real. (Reaches for a pack of cigarettes and takes one out.) I lie in my bed and think, staring at the ceiling. And they're there, hovering above me. Ghost? (Pause lights cigarette) I throw the covers over my head, but I know they're still there, that they'll always be. (Pause) Want a cigarette?

Tom: Haven't smoked in years. You know that.

Harvey: Oh Yea. (Finished beer) It's hard to get to



sleep at night. Even harder to get up in the morning.  
(Holds up bottle) It just helps me by.

Tom: Everyone else gets by. Lot's of Vets...

Harvey: (Stares off) It was easy to get up in the bush.  
(Looks at Tom) Number one, the mosquitos stung you awake. And when you woke up, you sometimes thought you were at home, you'd wake up forgettin' about Nam and Charlie altogether. Then you'd open your eyes and the illusion was gone. (Pause) Yea, it was easy to get up when you had something to work for, like staying alive. I remember waking up one morning. Charlie stumbled over us...what a fucking mess. I shot bolt upright in a sleepy daze. So glowing traces scurry through the camp like fire flies, heard cracking pops like firecrackers. "What's going on," was all I could manage. I heard people yelling, some commanding, some panicking, some screaming like a little kid getting stung by a hornet. I looked at my buddy Bobby Cardigan, we called him Bob cat. We looked at each other, not saying a word. My heart was pounding in my chest like artillery fire. We just couldn't say anything. Whole conversations pass through those spilt second looks into your buddies eyes. Bark and splintered wood hit me in my face from the tree I was sleeping next to. I leaned on it when it was my watch, but Charlie just shredded it into kindling. My weapon was in my hand, it was automatic like grabbing for your momma's breast when you're a baby. But I didn't know where to shoot, which way to run. I wanted to get up and find cover, but I didn't know if I'd just run into enemy fire head on. Tommy Willis got it behind me, cowering, holding his helmet hard to his head, his face planted in the dirt. Tom Tumb, just a kid. He was always so scared. He was screaming in hysterics, screeching out verses of the Hail Mary. "Pray for our sinner now and at the hour of our death." I felt something splash in my face. I... (Pause) It was Bobby ...He was... just shredded. Just like that tree. I looked down and his blood was all over me. I could taste it, smell burning flesh. I remember the noise he made. It was high-pitched, like a dog getting hit by a car. We looked at each other for just a spit second before he fell to the deck. He had a

look of...(Pause) Confusion. Good guy Bobby... (Pause) Tom bolted. It's funny what you remember when other things are just a blur. Tom stared at me, his helmet dropping to the ground. Then he got up and ran, his belt was too loose and it swung on his hips. He ran like a hoolahoop. (Pause. Harvey picks up bottle and looks at it. He speaks softly.) Tom Thumb was... He just ... They just cut him in half. Anyway, I got up and ran, then I ran pretty fuckin' fast, never even lettin' go of a round. We chewed up Charlie pretty good too. And I...I kept my head down. I held that rifle so tight like a protective mother. I crashed through bushes, almost tripped over roots. I remember rocks and bark flying by my head like shrapnel and bullets zinging past my ears with the audible high-pitched buzzes like screaming bees. I practically fell through some bushes and I...I saw one runnin', his back to me and...I felt my weapon go off. It vibrated in my hand. I couldn't let go of the trigger. I just emptied the entire clip into that gook's back, and every time a round hit, that gook would let out a higher squeal, like a pig...like Bobby. Didn't even know he was in my sights, he was runnin' like me. (Silence) He was the first I killed, wasn't even the last, but that squeal, it was real. And I knew if I looked into that gook's face, if I looked into his eyes, I'd see wife? Mother? Father? (Harvey stands) I sent that gook runnin' straight to hell. (Slaps money own on the table.) There ain't no umbrella in hell.

(Harvey exits. Tomy sits alone on stage and reaches for a cigarette. Lights fade to black.)





## The Male Body Machine

-by Safara Fisher

**NOT FOR A LIMITED TIME OFFER! PLENTY IN STOCK!**

The following items are included:

A razor, boxers, a tie, basketball shoes, jeans, cologne, and initialed bathrobe, a watch, a kinky toy, a black shirt, a little black book, a remote control, a Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue, a miniature Ferrari, condoms and a portable bed set.

It is a simple machine not used for baking or any cooking activities. It will slice and dice, but that is about it. When it comes to home made, it draws a blank. Handy dandy, yes to a point. A fixer and a doer, if you want it to be. Careful though there will be some provisions. Make sure the ladder is not too high, or he won't climb up it. Agree on a time and date for all work needed, write it down and program it in. Check the T.V. guide, especially during the winter season. Any scheduling on Monday nights may interfere with its ability to do a good job. Water, snacks and continued appraisal is a necessity if you expect anything done at all.

There is a red button on the side of its head. Make sure it is on and lights up. Check it ever so often for possible battery change. Do it carefully and when it's turned off, it won't take kindly to any changes or alteration. You may need an extra hand with this part as well. The machine is likely to go haywire for a bit. If tune-ups become a monthly chore, check for signs of malfunctioning. Tests have shown that one out of every five show some signs of problems after four months. Possible signs of malfunctioning are an inability to perform commands, constant movements accompanied by an inability to attend program schedual meeting, a decrease in the amount of knowledge data retrieved and a lack of return on its memory bank.

The Male Body is made up of a steel metal exterior. An intricate connection of wires and colorful cables form the interior. To access the interior functioning system one must use a secret pass code which is personalized to each individual machine. Once inside the system, programs can be added or deleted

depending upon its functional use. There are two main cords that run through the system leading to separate compartments labeled brain and body.

The body compartment is subdivided into the lower and upper level with cables running only from the upper level to the brain. Signals are passed on occasion and at rapid speed to this region. The lower level runs on a dial and is activated every fifteen minutes.

The brain compartment is a quick and resourceful center for facts, fiction and elementary problem-solving. All information given is easy reading and highlighted for fine details. The brain is subdivided into two areas that are joined together loosely by a thin electric chord. Most of the information given comes out of one area while the others serves as the back-up replacement. If you are looking for future explanations or extra information, you may want to order attachments available only through the Female Body package.

With the Male Body package, you get a thirty day free trial run. If not fully satisfied we will sent you a catalog from which you may choose a new one or get your money back. There is a limited warranty on the machine. Repairs or replacements of parts are covered. Full body break-downs, lack of useful material and loss of the machine are not covered. We do, however, have a lost and found department open to the public day and night.

So, if you are looking for a resourceful, accessible, malleable and programmable machine the Male Body is prefect for you! So stop by and get your Male Body today! Any color, size and shape is available upon request. Specialty orders must be mailed in three weeks in advance of delivery date. The How To Use Him book is free of charge if you call now!





## Dancing

-by Asa Leighton

I watch as people play martyrs  
Making jokes of us all  
But I wait  
Wait for them to fall  
Struck dumb by their own stupidity  
So I still dance on and on  
From here to there  
And the great beyond.  
So if you ever need  
Someone to call  
You can find me dancing.  
At the edge of sanity  
Playing games with the gods  
Over who is going to fall  
Screaming into the abyss  
Asking God if I am right  
Asking God if there is meaning to my life  
As I strain to hear the answer  
All I hear is the faint echo of my heart  
As my heart crumbles apart  
Broken by love  
Broken is the winged bird that can no longer fly  
Still I ask God  
I ask God why?



## My Father

-by Stacey Layne

I don't need to be scolded  
Don't point out the mistakes I have made.  
In my heart I have them memorized  
and through my dreams relive.  
My mind tries to tell me,  
but my heart won't let me forget.  
Save the truth for tomorrow;  
today I want to live.

I can cry a mountain stream,  
make a waterfall of sins,  
forsake myself of sanity,  
and realize what I did.  
In my life I've done many things,  
overlooked my conscience keep.  
Once again I'll close my eyes  
trying to repent.

I can't recall memories  
of happier days,  
where the innocence surrounded me  
with family and friends.  
In my world I create  
what reality is.  
Tell me what I want to hear  
and help me to forgive.





### 3 A.M.

-by Amy Coyle

Three A.M. rolls around and things are still going strong. People are everywhere, doing everything. Music is hammering through every window, pounding through floors, walls, and doors, with bass loud enough to make your whole body vibrate. Laughter echoes in from outside and there are a few particularly loud people screaming in the distance. They are too far away to make out words, but the tone of their excited screams is enough to let you know that they are having a good time; it makes people wish that they were outside, part of whatever it is that's going on.

There's a small huddle of girls in the bathroom, exchanging vital information. "So, what do you think about Jason?" one of them asks as she looks at herself sideways in the mirror, pulling at her blouse.

"I think you've had too much to drink," another replies as she leans her face in toward the mirror to make sure her lipstick is even. The others move around like battery-operated mannequins, posing themselves at the reflections in the mirror: a cross between department store window displays and blue jean commercials.

A couple of guys are running around a corner, slamming each other into the walls in a heated game of indoor soccer. They almost trip over the girl sitting in the hallway, talking on the phone. She pulls the telephone towards her on cue, without taking an extra breath or split-second away from her conversation. An intense basketball game is going on out back. In between songs, you can hear the ball bouncing off the pavement.

If you stand in front of this building, all of the sounds mingle together and drift outward. The energy seeps out through all the cracks and you can almost feel the ground shaking. There are no cars driving by, no next door neighbors. Just the trees that haven't started to change color yet, moving back and forth slowly, like night watchmen. The earth and sky seem to be there only to hold up and watch over this building; this building that is bending at the sides to hold hundreds of 18-20 year old strangers - all looking for the same thing. In this contradiction of chaos and

peace, you can smell the energy of youth.

There are a few new people sitting in a room; this is their first time away from home and they still don't know what to think. The room is lit up like an electric minefield. The television is on in the corner with the sound turned down - the only thing that comes in right now is paid commercials. Dion Warwick and her psychic friends look like bad mimes as they chat about the future, while the D.J. talks on the radio. The people in this room listen to the college radio station, not because they particularly like the music, but because they're freshman and they think it's the thing to do. Next to the stereo, the computer is still on from the paper that was abandoned hours ago - the screen saver shoots fireworks and explodes in bright colors. The answering machine under the window shines its bright red light, waiting for phone calls - waiting for someone to respond to the carefully constructed message that took an hour to create perfectly. The microwave radiates for a few minutes to prepare a healthy bag of popcorn - the perfect snack at 3 A.M. for a college freshman. All other possible lights are on and they sit on the floor, playing cards, joking about what their parents would do if they spent a Friday night here. They don't consider that their parents were young once, too, and they could have been the particularly loud people in the distance or the ones running around the corner.

At the end of the hall, there is a bunch who just got back from a party. They fly up over the top of the staircase and fall all over each other. They roll around on the floor, laughing like crazed hyenas. Out of their madness crawls one pale girl who mumbles something about, "never doing this again."

"Uh-oh," says another as she crawls behind her. She tries to help her friend to the bathroom, because she has been there before and knows how much of a comfort it is to have someone rub your back and hold your hair out of the way as you lose all the cheap keg beer you drank. The rest of the group decides that they will crawl, too, and leave in the direction of where their rooms might be. Because they all live on the same floor, there are about five or six beer-soaked college students on their knees in front of their doors, struggling with keys. As they fall into bed, they realize



that they drank too much also, not only because the room is spinning, but because their heads are already pounding. Little do they know that it's just the bass in the music from upstairs.

The room with the music looks like an overloaded elevator. The windows are open but that's not enough to take away the heat or the giant cloud of smoke that is circling the ceiling. They don't seem to notice or care very much, even though they are sweating and squinting. This group has been doing shots all night to see who will last the longest. The room has some new people in it and those who came back for more. Somehow, being there gives them all the feeling that they belong in this place. They talk about something that happened earlier that night as if they were age-old friends talking about memories from years that have passed. They don't seem to notice that their casual talking is actually screaming, just so that they can be heard over the music. A classic song - one that everyone knows the words to - comes on and they start to sing and sway in unison. "YES THEY'RE SHARING A DRINK THEY CALL LONELINESS. BUT IT'S BETTER THAN DRINKIN' ALONE... SING US A SONG, YOU'RE THE PIANO MAN..." They think they sound pretty good.

But the girl next door cringes as the sound penetrates her earplugs. She just made a cup of tea and is sitting down to do some reading for a class. She already tried to sleep, but decided that it's impossible until the party is over. She bangs on the wall to stand her ground, even though she knows that they can't hear her. "Lunatics," she says to herself. She can't understand why people insist on partying night after night. She starts to read but can't concentrate and throws the book at the wall. "I'll bet they heard that one." She turns on the fan to drown out the noise, pushes her earplugs in even further, and takes another shot at sleep. At least she knows that they will sleep most of the next day, and she can get some studying done then. She'll be damned if she doesn't get a 4.0 this semester. She starts to drift off to sleep, sure that she is the only person in this place who isn't a maniac.

But she is wrong. Two doors down (on the other side of the loud room) there is a girl crying in the dark

by her window. She is a freshman and she really hasn't made any friends yet, because she is so scared and shy. She listens to the music and people singing next door and thinks that she'll go over and ask for a fork or something - in hopes that she'll be invited into their "circle." She wrote a letter to her best friend from home earlier, and she holds it in her hands. The ink starts to run from all the tears that she has gotten all over it. But that doesn't matter, she knows what she wrote:

Hey, what's up? Well, sorry it has taken me so long to write, but I have been really busy. I was supposed to go to this party tonight with some people on my floor, but I figured I should take at least one night to stay in, ya know? So, anyway, everything is great with me - you should have come you would love it here tons of parties and cute guys. I have a million stories to tell you, but I'll have to write back, someone's at my door.

She is lost and lonely beyond words and doesn't have the courage to try and change anything. She lies to herself, believing that she does try to fit in and this was some horrible fate cast upon her that she can't do anything about. Nevertheless, she cries herself to sleep every night, waiting for someone to find her.

But the people in their room below her would be her friends. They would never judge anyone - they just wish that everyone could experience what they feel right now. The lights are off, except for the lighted blue lava lamp in the corner and the black light that reflects off of velvet posters and the mural they painted earlier. They light another stick of incense, just in case. They get stoned and watch The Doors for two hours. Now they smoke a little more and listen to Pink Floyd.

"Wouldn't it be great if you could just lay here and watch your own funeral procession? But, ya know, not be dead? I mean, imagine if you saw everyone that you have ever met in your life walk by, starting with people you said "hi" to or met at a party and, like, the people behind the counter at McDonalds. And when they walk by you just know exactly what they thought of you in that one moment they saw you.



And then you see people you kind of knew, then people you dated, then your friends, all the way up to your parents?"

"Wow, that sounds pretty cool." They sit around and talk like this for hours and think that they sound like the greatest philosophers of all time.

One thing they all know for sure - tomorrow night at 3 A.M., the scene will be the same.



### Unpardonable Sin

-by Yvonne J. Emery

In the midst of my sleep I am woken,  
By the sharp remembrance of their swears.  
I listen close and hear what is spoken;  
The most hateful words for a child to bear.

Blacked out the anger screaming from pain,  
Bitterness so thick a knife could cut through.  
Within the compounds of the binding chain.  
She cries herself to sleep not knowing what to do.

"It's not my fault!" the child desperately claims.  
I didn't mean to make you stay with him.  
"Forgive me," I begged to escape the blame,  
But I've committed unpardonable sin.

Sleeping again controls the child of the past,  
Fooled her to believe all is safe at last.



### "My Sister"

-by Kristan Scinto

Our bonds so clear, it seems transparent,  
Yet time binds us from our mothers womb.

When I cried, you held me tight,  
When accomplishment complimented me- you praised.  
I looked up to you- my idol.

I waited for your year's experience.

I looked up to you- my sister.  
My love and admiration is a pit of never ending  
indulgence.

I indulge in your wisdom; your teachings.  
The path which I follow are imprints of your footsteps.

Yet freedom to the self, you taught me.  
With guidance and selflessness, you've made me a  
woman.

I look up to me now,  
Because I remind myself of you.





## ReBirth

-by Jason Healy

Ascending from the strict line of land, the moon glides through the twilight, hiding in the sun's final beaming voice. It is only until the moon reaches the greater part of the sky does he dominate the night with his stolen glow. His cold face sits stationary amongst the other eyelids in the sky. Tonight he will move no further. The bell towers chime is final, for as he waits, all motion waits with him.

Resting her head, the forest quietly snuggles against the soft mountains and takes to sleep. She opens her invitation to her friends so they may play in the warmth of her body. Yet even the creatures who play in the absence of sunlight seem to collectively hold their breaths. They smell a new presence which floats amongst the bones of their mother. A welcomed guest has arrived.

The moon waiting like an expectant father, peers in through the skin of the forest to witness the deep glow within her womb. He sees a joyous fire dancing alone. She stretches her hands toward the moon welcoming his intrusion of her dance. However, the moon darkens himself so not to interrupt the fire's light with his own. He understands that this is his time to be dominant amongst the night and not within the forest.

From around the bones of the forest bursts of small winds sprint towards the fire. These small children dance with the lonely flame, wrapping themselves around jagged sides. The fire swoons to the children's freedom. She enjoys the innocence that they bring. But like the moon, the children feel the blind stares of the beings that hold claim around the fire and wisk themselves away to play out over the river. They know they will not bother anyone there. Because even they can sense that their behavior, although faultless, is not appropriate for tonight.

With the forest asleep, the moon stationed away, and the winds playing over the water, the fire extends her presence to reveal six fleshless beings, skeletons, who were introduced to the world thousands of years ago. Entombed in dirt and dust, they sit in a loose circle like calm statues with soft bones. Along with

everything else, they, too, wait. Only they wait for reasons other than the moons' and forests'. They wait for their rebirth into the world.

As quick as dreams end and as soft and quiet as a mother kiss, a band of clouds hover over the forests body. Wearing dark masks, they glide over the forests body gently covering her womb. There they nestle themselves for the evening. The forest is kept warm this evening by the dark invited stranger.

Throughout the long night the clouds emit their rain droplets into the mother's flesh, cleansing the ground below them. The drops cling to the ground, trees and the six skeletons. As the rain continues to fall on their frames, the debris that collected for so long begins to break away from their bodies. The weight of those long years is finally diminished and the skeletons feel a wondrous relief. Their heads arise from their shoulders which is the first sign that they are free from their hibernation. Soon they stand and stretch themselves toward the rain in front of the glowing fire.

Regaining their senses, the skeletons focus upon a glorious scene that will forever stay with them. For as the rain washed away their stagnation, it also began to dwindle the fire's light. The once dancing fire is now smothered under the cloud's rain, so that its light became dimmer and dimmer. Finally, all that was left was a pocket of steam that seems to just float above the ground. Yet, it does not disperse into the clouds, but stays in a confined bubble hovering above the area where at one time it danced.

Returning through the bones of the forests, the small, wind children arrive in the clearing realizing their friend is no longer present. They notice the same large mass of white air remaining stationary where their friend once leaped and played. Quickly, they rush towards the steam, circling around it as if their old friend was still there. Over and over, they circle around the steam until even the steam moves in a circular motion. It appears that soon the steam was following the actions of the children, spinning faster and faster with them. While the children run in their circles, the skeletons notice that the white air is now taking a form.

Instinctively, the skeletons gather together the



dirt that once kept them in hibernation and begin to lob it into the swirling form. The form collects every piece of dirt and mud that is tossed and holds it in its presence not letting any part of it escape. The more dirt that is contributed to the form the more defined it becomes. As all the dirt is collected and given to the form, the skeletons can see that this form has taken the shape of a woman. Soon her movement slows and the skeletons see for the first time the recognizable appearance of their mother standing before them.

A long and heavy silence is all that can be felt around the clearing. Quick glances are exchanged from body to body, finally ending with all eyes resting on the figure before them. Some time passes before their mother gives the six individuals a soft, yet distinct motion for all the figures to approach her. Without hesitation, the skeletons move closer together around their mother so that they all can see her face as well she can see theirs. Looking at the ground below her, the lady figure reaches down and finds six cinders which are left from the fire. She collects them into her smooth hands and hold them first to her head then to her mouth and then her chest. As she does this, the cinder's brighten to an incredible glow of a rich, deep red.

"These remaining pieces of my light are now your blessings."

As she says these words, she approaches the first skeleton. Taking one of the ambers, she presses it into his chest. There the cinder sits suspended filling the empty cavity with a pulsating radiance.

"For you my child, the blessing of Scent. Collect that which has been left for you."

Again she reaches into her hand for another cinder and places one into the next skeleton.

"For you is the blessing of Vision."

Around the half circle of individuals, she gives her blessings; a blessing of Silence, of Touch, of Speech and of Imagination.

With her blessings distributed amongst her kin, an expression of satisfaction seems to wash over her facial character and a slight smile emerges from her lips. At the same time, a contemplative thought is also evident, as though she was listening to the strong stillness around her. Then turning around she closes

her eyes for a final time.

With this last gesture, a strong wind arose though the forest. From many distances away it could be heard growing; a force gaining enormous strength. Until, at last, it reached the clearing, where this wind collided against the frail shell of the woman. Her dirt figure broke apart under the tremendous blow and all that was left was the burned patch of ground where she once stood.

As well, the skeletons were jolted to the ground from the enormous impact of the wind. They lay on the ground startled and confused. Peering through the forest, they tried to notice where their mother might have possibly gone, yet they only could see a large number of wind children playing amongst the trees. The large gust had vanished and only leaving the children behind.

"Children. Above you." a voice said. "Notice it is I, your mother." The six skeletons focused their heads upwards above the burned area. "I have completed my task and have reached my final home. I am here with my friends the winds. It is your duty now to fulfill your blessing which I have given you." She could not be fully recognized, yet her voice was too distinctive to deny the notion of another presence saying these words. At last, the mother looked around her and called out to her surroundings; "Time to begin work again. So away with you all." With that, the clouds scurried away and the moon started his decent from the night sky, and alas, the tower chimed the next hour.





## Alone

-by Zephyr

It's so dark...  
I'd walk forth, but I can't see.  
I can hear her cry.  
She's saying something over and over...  
I'm afraid.  
I take a step nearer.  
Why does she cry?  
Why does she scream out in pain?  
I find myself falling,  
Into the cold, dark room where she is.  
She's locked up.  
She can't get out.  
I still can't see her.  
But the sound of her cries,  
Are right beside me.  
I search for a light.  
I find a book of matches.  
Her cries get louder,  
As I strike the first and fail.  
I strike the next,  
I look,  
I see myself,  
Alone, crying and I can't get out.



## CAGED

-by Patricia Doherty

Stage Setting: Roberta is a street woman who lives in Harvard Square. She a bright woman who has come from a rough life.  
(Lights come up and Roberta enters looking straight at the audience)

Roberta: She was gone for a while before that. Awe, what you know, fools. Food that's all, nothing else. Not much to ask for, huh. Suppose so. What the hell you know... Beggar, no! That's what you think. Beggar huh, just trying to... (pauses looks at audience, looks down shakes head.) Words mean nothing to you what's the use. Speaking not being heard. Just a street lady. Bum. Low life, right? Lost that's what you are. Can't understand. You kick me out. I've done nothing wrong. What's wrong with my money? Not good enough, huh? Bullshit, utter bullshit. Nothing more or less, or in between, just bullshit. Look at me. I'm thin, cold. You can't even let me sit down for coffee. You let her and... (Pauses) Oh I see, money that's it, or is it the image? Loser that's what you are. One hell of a loser. My money's not good enough! Hard times. That's all too hard sometimes, but I survive. I stretch my money. People like you wouldn't understand, wouldn't expect you to. Avoiding me, too scared to face truth. Unwilling to. Meanwhile you look pretty, eat well and feel warm. Enjoy!

(Lights go down and come up again. Roberta is in front of a book store. Carolyn is walking by with a friend, she sees Roberta and comes up to her.)

Carolyn: Hi how are you? Do you remember me, I used to work at the One Potato Two Potato Restaurant.



Roberta: Oh ya, I remember you. (she begins to smile) How are you?

Carolyn: I'm doing OK. Just in the square to hang out. It's nice to see you. I haven't seen you in a while.

Roberta: Ya, I haven't been around the square for a year or so. Are you still in school?

Carolyn: Ya, this will be my last year. Then I have to go find a job.. So do you still go by the Potato any more?

Roberta: No, the owner won't let me come in.

Carolyn: That's because he's an asshole. I'm not surprised that he would be like that. He doesn't care about anything.

Roberta: Just like everyone else. That's all.

Carolyn: Man has it been really cold or what? It's constantly below zero now. It's definitely colder than last year.

Roberta: Oh yeah, that's why it would be nice if I could go and get a cup of coffee once in a while. But nobody lets me in with all my stuff. I can't leave it anywhere or someone will steal it. It really suck. I do the best I can, to survive with the money I have. But I keep on getting forced out.

Carolyn: Boy, that pisses me off. Many people just don't care they're too busy with their own life to bother caring for someone else.

Roberta: Well... I... that's life. As long as I get some type of food and have a blanket, I'll survive with what I have.

Carolyn: I'm glad you think that way... Oh, well Roberta I'll let you eat. I just wanted to see how you are. Good luck and I hope to see you soon.

Roberta: Bye nice seein' you again. See you soon.

Carolyn: Hey, if you ever want to get in contact with me here, I'll give you my address. (She pulls out a piece of paper and writes down her address) Don't hesitate to write me.

Roberta: Why?

Carolyn: Because I don't know, if you need me, here it is.

Roberta: Bye! Uh, Thanks.

(The two young woman walk away and the lights fade.) (Break in the scene to Carolyn at mental hospital ward. Lots of smoke from cigarettes. Cigarettes overflowing out of the ashtray. Long plastic couches. a few chairs. The hospital room surrounds the ward in a circle. The room is all gray and browns. A card table that is always in use. lights come up and Carolyn is talking to a anonymous person on the ward.)

Anonymous person: Angestine the shrubber collects and grows shrubs. (continues Babbling)

Carolyn: What? No, Roberta. Where is she?

Anonymous person: Can I just borrow your umbrella it's raining in here.



Carolyn: Man what assholes...(Man walks by and pukes) Oh god gross!

Roberta: This is the crap I deal with, crazy assholes puking bloody vomit with black speckles and watching Oprah at 5pm. That's if I do what I'm told. Like a robot. I'd rather be living in the street that dealing with this crap every day. Society gives me this. Haven't done shit to deserve crap. Oh well... I'm not gonna go off on that, I'll make myself feel worse. Forget it, it's not worth it.

(Roberta looks away, lights fade on Carolyn and Roberta stands there in dream like position she reads mask poem..)

Masks,  
Caged,  
Freedom,  
Rage,  
Walled up  
Caged animals  
Trapped with rage  
Bursting gusts of emotion  
Dying  
Released  
Pulled out of tunnels  
Persistent  
Aggressive  
Dangerous (possibly)  
Only fears  
Unlocking shields  
Denying self worth  
words emerging  
From the soul

Valuing respect  
enduring life

Speaking freedom

Mystical beats of a courageous soul

Carolyn: So, then what happened?

Roberta: They took the watch off my arm. Pissed me off. So I said, who the hell do you think you are, that's my watch. Just because I'm stuck on this street doesn't mean I stole this watch. Shut the fuck up, thief. That's all he could say, so that's when I turned to him and said, nobody calls me a thief but the man I steal from.

Carolyn: Where did you get that from?

Roberta: From a old film I watch when I was little. Oh man what the hell. We go though life expecting something but what do we really know. What's going to happen to us now?

Carolyn: Well how can we, It's OK not to know. We can just take things one day at a time...

Roberta: But I'm sick of this crap, people puking, sitting around, being treated like shit and taking scary pills that make me comatose. Is that what my life is leading me to, fuck that.

Carolyn: Well, think about how you tried to survive out in Harvard square. It was the coldest months of the year and you survived.

Roberta: Yeah and got shit, there's just so much I can do. Never get chances to breath. Everyone's on my case. No peace like before. Yes, sometimes life on the street is lonely, but I like it better than in here. Trapped. I could enjoy my own life without all the materialistic aspects. Nobody understands.



Carolyn: Ugh, Oh forget it. Can't anyone tell me where Roberta is. Is that so hard?

(Roberta peaks around the corner. She's sitting on a couch by herself)

Roberta: Who's is call me?

Carolyn: (looking over and smiles) It's me. (Sign of relief) Finally I've found you. It took me a 1/2 hour to get out of someone you were in this ward and then I meet that guy. Ugh! (pointing to a guy pretending to hold an umbrella) I'm so happy to see you. (sighs of relief)

Roberta: What're you doing here? How'd you find me?

Carolyn: I saw you that day when that guy was giving you a hard time. I was able to get where you were. They had put you in that car and take you away. I was worried about you. So I called the police. That's how I knew where you were. I found your cart and took it to my house so you wouldn't lose anything. I was going to bring it, but when I called and asked they freaked out. Well, anyway I'm here and I brought you a couple of things that I thought might cheer you up.

Roberta: Wow, you did that for me, thought you were just trying to be polite. But you care. So rare. People caring.

Carolyn: Of course I do. What happened? The cops picked you up, why?

Roberta: I was talking to myself in the doorstep when those assholes came over began harassing me. Why, because they are afraid I would freak people out. Me, like I would hurt a fly, bullshit. I guess I can't think out loud. They came up and began harassing me, saw my watch, assumed I stole it. Of course...

Carolyn: (pauses) Sounds great, time to enjoy my own space, my own life. I'm always too busy to take time to contemplate, to just relax... I'm going to try to get them to let you out.

Roberta: Don't bother, nobody cares anyway?

Carolyn: Well I do and I'm not going to sit here and watch you be treated like shit anymore.

Roberta: (sighs, sarcastically) Oh... ok, Well how then?

Carolyn: I'll explain to your doctors what happened and tell them how you were fine on your own. I'll go to a court appointed lawyer and tell him how the cops harassed you. It must be illegal in some way... This crap has gone on long enough, it's time to do something about it...

Roberta: Oh don't bother just a waste of time...

Carolyn: Well, so what. At least I'm trying damn it. It's more than most people...,

Roberta: Fine, Fine, Do whatever you want. But don't expect much.

Carolyn: Roberta listen, this shitty attitude isn't gonna get you anywhere. Enough shit. Just try to be positive and stop expecting or accepting things to be the way they are.

Roberta: Yeah, yeah I know. It hurts sometimes. I give so much and get shit. Pathetic, the more I think about it...

Carolyn: Roberta! (looking at her concerned)

Announcement: It's time for all visitors to go. It's 8 o'clock. Visitors time is over.

Carolyn: Well I think I should go but I'll see you soon. Please know that I want to help you. I'm gonna talk to a lawyer about your problem. We'll see what they say. Then go from there, OK?



Roberta: OK, thank you. I'll see ya, bye.

Carolyn: Bye.

(Carolyn remembers when hsheer and Roberta are talking, Carolyn is on stage)

Carolyn: Its been a month since I saw Roberta... Dam I didn't mean to take so long... She seemed so different last time I went. (looking at the audience in a daze)

(Roberta walks in as Carolyn is sitting down, They have been talking for a while)

Carolyn: Something's occupying you. What's up?

Roberta: Nothin', Nothin'... I'm tired

Carolyn: Oh I see, Want me to go?

Roberta: No (Sharply)...No,... I... Ah...am thinking about the past... Hate talking about it.

Carolyn: You don't have to, It's ok.

Roberta: No, it's not. I'm tired... Real tired. Drained...I've been thinking about the past too much lately, too much... too much time..Do you have a brother? (Carolyn nods yes) Don't lose him. Pain in the ass sometimes, I know. When they're gone they're gone for good. Lost, possibly, alone...Nothing to do just happens.

Carolyn: Do you have a brother?

Roberta: Anthony, great kid, 33 now. Don't know where he is...Can't see me like this...Not his fault...Dad's...We had to go...such an asshole. Real mean, mean, mean. Mother died, I was three. He married again, Grace, Great woman....tough, but kind. She really loved us, ya know, but...(she looks away) took that away too. Divorce...forced to live with my... the

asshole. We ran away. Got caught by police... They took him away, my own true...like taking away a piece of me...

Carolyn: Who was taken?

Roberta: Anthony (Pauses) I was left alone. Did good for a while, then...Got sick, lost my job...had nothing. Fourteen years later, this is all I have...I'm my own home. (Carolyn speechless, looks down sighs) Don't know what to say huh. Me neither...just life, one big piece of crap.

Carolyn: Bullshit, it's not. You've touched my life. Might not count but, you did. I've learned a lot from you.

Roberta: Yeah,What?

Carolyn: How to be strong, free, and appreciate everything, and who I am. I never really did that say much before.

Roberta: I'm tired, real, real tired, visits over, see ya bye. (Roberta walks away slowly)

Carolyn: But...Ah...(Sadly, looks down) Bye. (she pauses a second, looks up, comes back to reality) I should have said what I wanted to that day... Something meaningful.. But what? Not much.. What the hell do I know, just a kid...Excuses...What could I say? Who knows!

(Carolyn looks up sighs. Lights fade and come back up to the Mental Ward. Carolyn walks in looking around then stops when the nurse enters)

Nurse: Excuse me can I help you?

Carolyn: Yes, I was looking for Roberta

Nurse: Who?

Carolyn: Roberta,... (Nurse Confused) She was a



street woman who was picked up two months ago.

Nurse: Uh... oh that woman she died a week ago... Sorry, so many people come in and out of her it's hard to keep track of them all. Sorry.  
(nurse walks away)

Carolyn:(looks down, silent) she was right nobody cares... even I neglected her... for what, excuses of being busy. Bullshit, Bullshit. At least she's free from her pain.

(Lights Fade and music comes up, Song from Enigma lights are at a dim and a dances. "Releasing the bird")

(Narrator Comes out and reads Echo's poem)

Echo's playing  
words saying  
Don't loose the beat  
Music beats  
Dance Beats  
Rhythm built inside  
Word beats  
Love beats  
Never meant to hide  
Play your rhythm  
Dance your soul  
Speak you freedom  
Let it be known

Words give us knowledge  
Grace and understanding  
unlocked prisons

Beating the beat of time  
Clock in our soul  
freeing yourself  
Eternal Truth





## Eating An Orange

-by Kim Schaffner

Cold like an operating room chill,  
The orange awaits invasion.

Round like the light that blinds the face  
Waiting for anaesthesia and  
the surgeon's knife,  
The orange awaits invasion.

Skin, tight and damp,  
Protective and fearful  
Of cuts and hands that  
Forever change its form,  
The orange awaits invasion.

The incision is made,  
And the infinity of circle has ended.

The soft, wet insides drip like an I.V.,  
Pumping life into life.

Its silence speaks that choice does not exist.

It tastes both sweet and bitter,  
Like the post-operative feeling  
Of waking and realizing that pain has ceased  
But your scars remain.



Notes



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